

The Random Jottings of Donald Jay from Nelson in Pendle.

1690s The Great Storm of Hurstwood.

In the small village of Hurstwood, nestled amidst the rolling hills of England, Edmund Tattersall lived a quiet and peaceful life. The year was 1690s, a time when the whispers of the supernatural still lingered in the air, and people lived closely connected to nature's rhythms. Little did Edmund know that he was about to witness a force of nature so powerful that it would be etched into the memories of generations to come.

It was a cold winter's night when the first gusts of wind began to stir. The villagers huddled in their homes, seeking warmth and security from the impending storm. The wind whispered ominously through the cracks in the doors and rattled the windows, as if foretelling the chaos that was about to be unleashed upon them.

As midnight approached, the wind grew stronger, gradually escalating into a fearsome tempest. The howling gale tore through the countryside, uprooting trees that had stood for centuries. The once peaceful landscape was transformed into a battleground of swirling debris and crashing branches.

In the neighboring villages of Extwistle and Worsthorne, the fury of the storm was particularly intense. Terrified by the relentless roaring, the villagers fled their homes, seeking refuge in churches and other sturdy structures. The wind's relentless onslaught showed no mercy, unsating houses and tearing apart shippens, leaving the inhabitants in a state of shock and despair.

As the storm raged on, something peculiar happened. The wind, originating from the west, carried with it an otherworldly presence. The trees, stripped of their leaves, were coated with a thick crust of salt, as if the storm had come from the depths of the ocean itself. And then, against the backdrop of the darkened sky, a magnificent flock of sea gulls soared overhead, their cries mingling with the cacophony of the tempest. It was an eerie sight that both fascinated and unsettled those who witnessed it.

Edmund Tattersall, a man of deep curiosity and a love for nature's mysteries, braved the storm to observe this extraordinary phenomenon. Clutching his father's Bible tightly in his hands, he ventured out into the chaos, seeking answers and solace amidst the tempest's fury.

With each step, Edmund battled against the relentless gusts, his coat billowing behind him like a flag of resilience. He made his way to the top of Extwistle Hill, a vantage point overlooking the village and the surrounding countryside. There, he stood, breathless and awe-struck, as the storm unleashed its full might.

The sea gulls, their feathers glistening with salt, soared gracefully above him. Their flight seemed both majestic and determined, as if they possessed a purpose known only to the elements themselves. Edmund felt a profound connection to these creatures, as if their presence held a hidden message from the forces of nature.

In that moment, as the wind whipped around him and the sea gulls danced in the sky, Edmund experienced a profound revelation. He realized that, just like the storm, life could be unpredictable and uncontrollable. But within the chaos, there was also beauty and wonder, waiting to be discovered by those who dared to venture out and seek it.

From that day forward, Edmund Tattersall became known as a fearless explorer, delving into the mysteries of the natural world. He chronicled his findings in his father's Bible, ensuring that the stories of the great storm and its sea gulls would be passed down through the generations.

And so, the tale of the great storm became a legend in Hurstwood, a reminder of the power and unpredictability of nature. It served as a testament to the resilience of its inhabitants, who, like Edmund, learned to embrace the storms of life.

By Donald Jay